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The Xavier NewsWire

Published by the students of Xavier University since 1915 | *Fiat justitia, ruat coelum* | Volume C Issue 22



February 25, 2015

Big East Champions



The Xavier men's swimming and diving team won its second Big East Championship in as many years from Feb. 18-21 at Ithaca College in Ithaca, N.Y. The women's team took third place. See page 6 for the full story.

Rivalry Week

Men roll past Cincinnati and Butler, fall to St. John's

BY NICK MCGILL
Sports Editor

Xavier men's basketball went into the Crosstown Shootout on Feb. 18 looking to spoil the Cincinnati Bearcats on their home court. After narrowly escaping with a victory at Cincinnati, the Musketeers upset No. 19 Butler at home before losing by one to St. John's on the road.

As the Musketeers took the floor at Fifth Third Arena, the hostile crowd booed. Way in the back corner of the upper level behind the Xavier bench, a small army of X-treme fans raucously cheered on their Musketeers.

Xavier jumped out to a hot start in the first half leading by 12 at the break. The Bearcats wasted no time in the second half to claw their way back into the game. Xavier saw its lead finally vanish with 1:58 to play when a tip in by Cincinnati junior forward, big man Octavius Ellis, tied the game at 53.

Xavier would have to play catch-up for the rest of the game and regained the lead only briefly on a clutch 3-point shot by senior guard Dee Davis. Down by just one, freshman forward Trevon Bluiett went to the line having yet to score and knocked down two crucial free throws to seal the victory for the Musketeers, 59-57.

Xavier then came to Cintas Center with momentum after getting a tournament resume-build-

ing win on the road.

The Musketeers faced the No. 19 Butler Bulldogs and dominated from start to finish — once leading by 29 points with 5:47 left in the game. Xavier won 73-



Newswire photo by Adam Spegele
Xavier edged out crosstown rival Cincinnati behind senior guard Dee Davis, who was 5-5 shooting 3-pointers.

56 with sophomore guard Myles Davis leading the way with 18 points.

Perhaps the most important of the three games over six days was the road game at Madison Square Garden against the St. John's Red Storm. St. John's

is currently one of the hottest teams in the conference, having won four of its last five games.

The game was full of runs, ups and downs for both teams as each took its respective fans on an emotional ride.

Xavier jumped out to a hot 11-0 lead to start the game before getting overpowered by St. John's for the remainder of the half, going into halftime down 28-20.

At the onset of the second half, Xavier's offense began to click as the team went on a 15-0 run to lead 35-30 with just more than 12 minutes to play. Down the stretch, the Xavier offense continued its trend of turning the ball over and getting shots blocked. Xavier finished with 20 turnovers to only 14 assists, resulting in 20 points off of turnovers for the Red Storm.

As the clock ticked down, Myles Davis missed a running jumper, and Xavier fell to St. John's 58-57. The loss brings Xavier's conference record to 8-8 and continues to put pressure on the Musketeers to earn a marquee win to help their tournament chances.

That opportunity may come on Feb. 28 when Xavier takes on Big East powerhouse No. 6 Villanova for senior night at 2 p.m. at Cintas. On March 7, the team will also travel to Omaha, Neb., to face Creighton to end the regular season.

'It's On Us'

SGA president petitions for reform of student sexual assault conduct boards

BY MEREDITH FRANCIS
Campus News Editor

Student Body President Colleen Reynolds has joined other student body presidents around the country in signing a letter advocating for improvement in handling sexual assault cases on college campuses.

In an open letter released to Secretary of Education Arne Duncan on Feb. 23, Reynolds and 75 other student body presidents,

Office for Civil Rights (OCR) recommends that students not be allowed to participate in conduct hearings related to sexual violence. It was this policy that prompted Wright's involvement.

"When I learned of the Department of Education's recommendation that students be removed from these hearings, in the form of a recommendation to Ohio State from an agreement with us last fall, I became deep-

representing more than 1.2 million students nationwide, outlined their concerns about the role of students on conduct boards that review sexual assault cases.

Celia Right, student body president



Photo courtesy of wikipedia.org
U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan

at the Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, started the initiative after learning about the failings of university conduct boards throughout the United States.

Wright said she initially planned to write a letter by herself to Duncan.

"I thought to write a letter from me to Arne Duncan, but came to realize that the message would be more powerful if I could prove that this is an issue meaningful to students nationally. I found contact information for student body presidents and reached out to as many as I could," Wright said.

Reynolds said she was eager to get involved after Wright approached her.

"With the launch of the national 'It's On Us' campaign this fall, sexual assault prevention has been on the agenda of countless student body presidents across the nation," Reynolds said. "It's been inspiring to hear the creative work that student governments across our state have been doing to make sure our communities are both safe and respectful of all members."

According to the letter, the

ly concerned. While the recommendation means well, its effect may be counter-intuitive," Wright said.

The letter lists objections to the OCR policy, saying "students provide valuable perspective as peers that faculty and staff

cannot. They relate to the student experience directly and provide insight during questioning and discussion, enhancing the quality of hearings."

Before signing the letter, Reynolds discussed the issue with Title IX Coordinator Kate Lawson, whose office handles such cases.

"While I put a lot of thought behind my decision to sign the letter and offer an appendix, my decision to sign was ultimately quite simple: student voice should always be a priority, especially in the context of representation," Reynolds said.

According to Lawson, the letter is representative of a turning point in sexual assault dialogue.

"I think it says that, courtesy of persistent, courageous student activism across the country, we've reached a tipping point," Lawson said. "This is no longer an issue anyone can opt out of discussing or pretend doesn't exist. I think it says a critical mass of students across the country understand the impact sexual violence has on their lives and their communities, and want their voices heard on the matter."

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Some residents of University Station were recently evacuated from the complex after reports of a carbon monoxide leak.

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Newswire file photo

Op-Ed

Guest Columnist Nick Bergeman discusses Brian Williams' truth-telling scandal in relation to the state of current media.

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Photo courtesy of showbiz411.com

February 25, 2015

Campus News

Edited by: Meredith Francis
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Brueggeman Fellows present research

BY JUSTIN WORTHING
Staff Writer

Xavier-sponsored international travelers returned to their point of origin on Feb. 20 to share stories of their adventures with their peers and professors.

Eight Brueggeman Fellows, who each received a \$3,000 travel grant from the Brueggeman Center, met in Kennedy Auditorium to discuss their travels and research around the world.

Senior Kevin Perkins presented first, discussing his research on EcoHealth, or the relationship between ecosystems and human health. He travelled to Benin in West Africa to work with a group of researchers studying Buruli ulcers.

Alumna Becky Seipel then shared her experiences in South Africa, with Jesuit Refugee Services. Seipel currently works with refugees at Catholic Charities, and she said her time in Johannesburg, South Africa helps her better understand her current clients and see where they are coming from.

Graduate student Rachel Snodgrass recalled her experiences of studying the effects of occupational therapy (OT) on rehabilitation in British women's prisons. She discussed the flaws in the prison system and how OT can help with rehabilitation by providing positive skills and healthy therapeutic outlets for prisoners.

Alum Maggie Cooley played a



Senior Kevin Perkins presents his research from Benin on EcoHealth.

video recalling her time observing the relationship between health and inequality in India. Inspired by Dr. Paul Farmer, she visited Hyderabad and Kolkata – Mother Teresa's former place of ministry – to look at the social factors of healthcare.

Alum and former *Newsweek* Photography Editor Andrew Matsushita displayed photos from his travels in New Orleans and Japan, looking at the different ways individualist and collectivist cultures respond to natural disasters, including Hurricane Katrina and the Japanese tsunami.

Senior Kayla Boehner shared her plans to study brain drain in East Africa, focusing on the small number of medical students that remain in their home country following graduation. She was un-

able to go last summer, however, because of political turmoil in the area.

Graduate Genevieve Hager looked at Alzheimer's disease research in the United States and Sweden and the differences between the two nations' health-care systems. Hager also met with many different Alzheimer's researchers in Europe, including the most prolific Alzheimer's researcher in the world.

Alum Spencer Liechty concluded with a video about his research from Indonesia, Malaysia, Bangladesh and other countries, to discover how democracy works in an Islamic context. He concluded that there are instances in which Islam and democracy are compatible, but not necessarily by all Muslim interpretations.

'March Gladness' returns to Xavier

BY RICH MEYER
Copy Editor

Xavier is launching the second annual social media takeover called “March Gladness” from March 9-11.

The program is run by many groups on campus, including students, faculty, alumni and staff.

"I love that March Gladness isn't just about the giving but incorporates it with general engagement of students, staff and faculty," Molly

Dugan, assistant director for leadership and orientation in the Office of Student Involvement Molly Dugan said.

Beginning in 2014, the program is designed as both a way to celebrate the Xavier community as well as to promote giving.

"In 2014, we decided to run the program to engage our alumni and students where so many of them are: on social media," Director for the Annual Fund and the 1831 Society Leigh Ann Fieber said. "Running it again this year was a no-brainer. In fact, our hope is that this becomes an important tradition and part of the Xavier experience for students during their time on campus and a time for them to reconnect when they

graduate.”

“#GladXavier” became the top trending topic in Cincinnati on Twitter during the event in 2014.

“First, during this 48-hour period, we hope to dominate social media outlets with #GladXavier. Second, we want to connect Xavier pride to philanthropic

**ARCH
NESS**
CH 9-11, 2015

Photo courtesy of xavier.edu

Donations made during March Gladness can support any part of the Xavier community, but the event is not solely focused on financial gifts.

“While there is a monetary aspect to March Gladness, I want to stress that what is most important is the engagement of our students, staff, faculty and alums. We aren’t looking for huge gifts — just folks to join the campaign,” Dugan said.

The event kicks off with a free breakfast in the Hoff Dining Hall on March 9.

For more information about March Gladness and for how you can get involved, visit www.xavier.edu/alumni/march-gladness.cfm.



Photo courtesy of xavier.edu

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Carbon monoxide leak found at U. Station

By JUSTIN WORTHING
Staff Writer

While some students enjoyed the free time on the Feb. 16 snow day, others were evacuated from their apartments when a carbon monoxide leak occurred in parts of University Station.

Firefighters detected high levels of carbon monoxide in the afternoon of Feb. 16 and evacuated students from the second-floor apartments in Building 2. Firefighters told students in the third-floor apartments to stay in their rooms.

Meghan Burge, a University Station resident, was in her third-floor apartment when she was notified of the leak.

“I knew nothing of the leak until a firefighter knocked on the apartment door, wearing a gas mask,” Burge said. “He told us that there was a leak from a generator on the bottom floor of the building and that levels of carbon monoxide were very high on the first and second floors. I asked what was being done about the situation and he said that residents ... on the third floor ... were to remain in their rooms with the door closed until further notified.”

Firefighters returned to Burge’s room roughly 10 minutes later to check carbon monoxide levels. According to Burge, they detected abnormal CO levels but assured her she would be safe in her room.

Other residents, however, claimed that they received con-



Photo courtesy of Cincinnati.com

Residents were evacuated from the first and second floors of Building 2 after a carbon monoxide leak was discovered.

flicting instructions between the firefighters and University Station’s management.

“A friend who was in the apartment at the time called the management office and was told that we should come to the clubhouse in the main building to wait out the situation and that it was fine to leave the building,” Burge said. “This is in direct contrast to the firefighters telling us to shelter in place. We heard nothing official from management until about three hours later, when they told us it was fine to re-enter the building. We never officially heard from them that there even was a leak to begin with,” Burge said.

Julie Becker, Burge’s roommate, was not in the room when the leak occurred but only heard about the hazard from her roommates.

“The only information received by management was an email stating it was okay to go back in the building without any explanation as to what happened,” Becker said. “The only way I would’ve known about the leak was via my roommates. Management did not provide any information about the leak in the email, so I might not have known anything at all.”

The *NewsWire* reached out to University Station’s management for comment, but since the leak occurred in Building 2 – which

houses the retail space – they stated that they did not have much information about the incident.

“Unfortunately, I do not have a great amount of detail on the incident as the leak actually occurred in the retail space,” Kathleen Murphy, leasing manager, said in an email.

“We do not have any gas utilities in the residential space, everything is electric and gas leaks are not possible in that sense as far as our space goes,” Murphy said.

University Station is a 20-acre mixed use apartment complex that includes 120 residential units, with 480 beds. It also serves as retail and office space.

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Students compete in College Movie Festival

"Everyone has something to contribute to Xavier," Towchik said. "And this is our contribution: as healers, therapists (mentally, emotionally, and physically), pseudo-parents, teachers and friends to the athletic population. We're the 'jack-of-all' trades in the healthcare field and that is something to be proud of and share with the world."

XU Alliance meetings are held weekly at 6 p.m. in Smith Hall room 344, and speakers are welcomed to bring fresh perspectives to the culture of acceptance which is growing in our modern time.

On Brian Williams

I believed in Brian Williams.

For those who do not know, Brian Williams was the managing editor and anchor of the “NBC Nightly News with Brian Williams.” Although almost everyone has heard Williams’s name recently, many young people only know Brian Williams as “the liar.”

About three weeks ago, nearly every major news outlet ran a story accusing Brian Williams of lying to the American people on television. Media members worldwide agreed that they have a responsibility to tell the truth and that a newsman is nothing without his trustworthiness.

Brian Williams became a symbol for everything wrong with the press and an instant pariah. NBC suspended him without pay for six months, which pleased some and displeased others. Many of the latter wanted him fired.

Now that we’ve established what the media has reported to us, let’s take a different look.

Few people know the extent of my admiration for anchors like Edward R. Murrow and Walter Cronkite. I love the news and may want to spend my life reporting it. As such, I hold a high standard for the quality and veracity of news that I consume. I am fiercely passionate about our right and need to be objectively informed. I believe that even college students have a responsibility to know what is going on in our community, country and world.

However, we live in the age of the 24-hour news cycle. It is better to be fast than accurate. We live in the age of personality-driven news that seeks to endlessly tell us what to think rather than just the facts.

Of course, expecting entirely objective reporting is a fruitless endeavor, but the good reporter will expose verifiable facts and let the public decide once they are informed. Edward R. Murrow is a hero of broadcast news because he made the brave decision to report on Senator Joseph McCarthy’s treatment of suspected communists and believed that the public had a right to judge if it was just. Murrow did not judge McCarthy on air but left the public to do so, suggesting that the issue was worth questioning.

Sadly, modern news seems unable to separate fact from opinion. There may be only one or two news outlets that strive to give the facts, not as the reporters see them, but as they exist.

I have watched many news outlets and many news shows. I trusted Brian Williams, Al-Jazeera America and The Associated Press. Williams has been caught in what appears to be a possibly career-ending lie. I now have been left with the choice to trust or abandon trust in Brian Williams, whom I have spent a half an hour of my day with for the last two and a half years. I will only watch news that I can trust,

because everyone deserves to be able to trust his or her news.

This is why I’ve watched the “NBC Nightly News with Brian Williams” every night and why I so tremendously admire Williams. He tells me facts, not what to think. I have never had a reason to distrust the facts of the news he has told me.

People are human and make mistakes. Mr. Williams is one of us, and he is not perfect. We will never know for certain whether he lied intentionally, but his reporting the controversial story correctly when it happened casts doubt on his deceitful intentions.

Everyone may have a personal opinion on the matter, and I believe that the trauma of the event and distantness of the memory led him to report it falsely. His helicopter was hit by gunfire, even if an RPG hit only the helicopter in front of him. If he knew that he was already on record telling the story correctly, why would he intentionally deceive the public? He would know he would be caught.

Numerous news outlets reported that Brian Williams had been lying about his story for the last 10 years, but the difference in reporting did not exist at all until about five years ago when he told the story on “The Late Show with David Letterman.”

He told it as a personal story and not as a news report. The issue arose when he was reporting on the incident retrospectively a few weeks ago.

Williams may have made an honest mistake, but no one will give him the benefit of the doubt. He reported and was wrong about a personal story. Personal memory from 10 years ago is much harder to verify than exterior facts, and we have no evidence to show that Brian Williams has ever lied about those.

Until proven otherwise by error in actual news facts, Brian Williams is the best newsman of our generation. I actually believe that he is the closest thing that we have to Walter Cronkite, and I have looked. Anyone who watches him consistently will know that.

I hope Brian actually comes back after his six months of suspension are done. We can’t afford to lose him because we already have so little.

Brian Williams is one of my news heroes. This has shaken me, but my faith in him still stands. I still believe in Brian Williams

Nick Bergeman is an English and electronic media double major from Detroit.



Newswire cartoon by Digba “Digs” Coker

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Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

February 25, 2015

Sports

Edited by: Nick McGill
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Men's swimming claims title

By ADAM TORTELLI
Staff Writer

Xavier swimming concluded another successful Big East Championship meet this past weekend when they traveled to Ithaca, N. Y.

For a second consecutive season, the men's team brought back a conference championship to Victory Parkway.

The team has won the championships both times since joining the conference last fall.

Junior Nick Foster stole the spotlight over the long four days by winning two individual races on his way to being named Most Outstanding Performer for the weekend.

Foster defended his title from last year with a victory in the 1650-meter freestyle.

Also repeating as conference champion, junior Luke Johans set a new school record in the 100-meter freestyle by edging out teammate Armando Moss by four-tenths of a second.

While Foster seemed to dominate every time he entered the water, sophomore Arthur Smith improved from last year's second place finish to claim his spot atop the conference in the 200-meter backstroke with a time 1:48.49.

This was not only Smith's new personal record, but it also moves him into second place in school history.

Although no first-place finishes came from the 200-meter breaststroke event, junior Rob Van Kirk finished sixth, two places behind



Photo courtesy of twitter.com

The Xavier men's swimming team repeated as Big East Champions and the 2015 Big East Swimming and Diving Championships held in Ithaca, N.Y. The men have captured the title both years since joining the conference last season.

senior teammate Michael Gordon.

Despite starting the tournament slowly on Feb. 18, the team picked up the pace over the last three days of the tournament to finish the weekend as champi-

ons by a wide margin of victory. Xavier (904) finished over 100 points ahead of the second-place Georgetown Hoyas.

Sophomore Erik Biernat led his teammates in the 200-meter

butterfly event, taking third place, while sophomore Gage Mitchell was close behind for fourth.

Head coach Brent MacDonald was honored by the conference as Coach of the Year after tying

Georgetown's Jamie Holder in the voting.

Additionally, the women's team returns to Cincinnati with a third-place finish under its belt. The Musketeers have shown great improvements over last year.

Freshman Paxtyn Drew gave the rest of the conference a glimpse of the havoc she will cause in the next three years. Drew's second-place finish in the 200 meter backstroke is now second all-time in Xavier history.

Junior Molly Kroeger added a top-five finish in the 100-meter freestyle.

A relay of Kroeger, Drew, senior Carolyn Stewart and senior Maddie Day set another school record for the 400-meter freestyle at 2:28.40. In addition to their tournament finishes, both teams were also recognized as CSCAA Scholar All-America teams, furthering Xavier's academic excellence in athletics.

Looking ahead to next season, both squads will be faced with a significant depletion of both talent and depth.

The men will be without Moss, Gordon, Carter Clark, Eric Dirvin, Will Oswald and Kiernan McGeehan. Johans and Foster will be looked at to build their in-water dominance into dryland leadership.

The women's team will compete in 2015-2016 with star performers Day and Stewart while also saying goodbye to seniors Carly Davis, Jacquelyn Misanik, and Kelsie Johns.

Musketeers continue road struggles

By BRENT RAINES
Staff Writer

Xavier women's basketball dropped its only game of the week at Butler as the Bulldogs became the third Big East team to sweep the Musketeers this season.

The 71-53 defeat was another rough game for the Musketeers (15-12 overall, 7-9 Big East) who have failed to score more than 63 points in four games since they laid 91 on Marquette earlier this month.

For the Bulldogs (14-13, 10-6), the win is their second after losing their first four games of the month. They went a perfect 8-0 in January. The first half was a tight and well-contested affair with five ties and eight lead changes.

The Muskies held their biggest lead of the game on a three-pointer from junior guard Jenna Crittendon that put them up 17-14 with 5:51 left in the first half.

A short jumper by sophomore forward Maddison Blackwell in the paint gave the Musketeers a 21-20 advantage with about four minutes to go.

Unfortunately for the Musketeers, that would be the last

time they held an advantage on the scoreboard as Butler closed the half on an 11-4 run to take a 31-24 lead at the break.

The second half was not kind to the Musketeers as Butler stretched out a 22-point lead, the largest of the game, with 2:58 left.

To add insult to injury, the Xavier bench was assessed a technical at the 7:07 mark. Junior guard Aliyah Zantt led Xavier with 14 points and six assists, while Crittendon added 12 points and a team-high seven rebounds.

Butler's Ijeoma Uchendu led all players with 28 points. The senior forward from Nigeria also grabbed a game-high 14 rebounds.

The Bulldogs were aided by a multitude of Xavier fouls and shot three times as many free throws as the Musketeers. They made most of them too, as they went 20-24 from the line while Xavier went just 5-8.

Both teams fired many shots from beyond the arc but neither team made many of them. The two teams shot a combined 11-44 from long-range, good for 25 percent.

The defeat also firmly puts the

Musketeers in seventh place in the 10-team conference, with two or more games separating them from the teams both ahead and behind them in the conference standings.

With only a few games remaining for each team, DePaul (22-7, 14-3) currently leads the conference with Seton Hall (24-4, 13-3) following closely in second.

The Musketeers have two games left and must win both to finish at .500 in conference play.

While both are at home, they are against two teams seeking to become the fourth and fifth teams to sweep the Musketeers in Big East play.

The game against Seton Hall tips at 7 p.m. on Feb. 27 in Cintas Center while the home game against St. John's starts at 2 p.m. on March 1. Brian Neal's squad lost at Seton Hall 78-54 in January, and seeks to avenge a 65-42 loss against St. John's from early December.

The Seton Hall game has been designated as the annual Play4Kay game, with proceeds going to the Kay Yow Cancer Fund in honor of the former NC State and Team USA coach.



Newswire photo by Adam Spegele

Junior guard Jenna Crittendon continues to be a beacon of light for the team.

‘Anything Goes’ sails on shaky waters



Despite an outdated plot and a lack of coherence among the cast, “Anything Goes” at the Aronoff proved to be glitzy, entertaining event whose classic Cole Porter score shined with every number.

BY JON HOGUE
Staff Columnist

As a part of its 2014-15 musical showcase, the Aronoff Center presented the Broadway classic, “Anything Goes.” Since 1934, “Anything Goes” has been a benchmark for theatrical excellence. The show’s current U.S. tour is a part of the production’s sixth theatrical revival. Several revivals have received Tony Awards for their accomplishments and often play to sold-out audiences overseas. With the lyrical genius of Cole Porter at the helm of this production, it is easy to see why everything goes right with “Anything Goes.”

The story focuses on Billy Crocker, Reno Sweeney and Hope Harcourt as they sail from New York to London aboard the “SS American.” Billy, a young Wall Street broker, is looking to make a name for himself in New York. Prior to his time on Wall Street, Billy meets and falls in love with a delightful young debutante named Hope Harcourt. The young couple barely knows one another, but falls head over heels at the prospect of a life together.

From there, the plot focuses on the show’s main attraction, Reno Sweeney. Reno is a famous singer whose looks often catch a second look from the fellas. This lifestyle hurts Reno because she loves Billy, but he only views her as a friend.

As the show continues, audience members are introduced to a host of memorable characters: Elisha Whitney, Hope’s wealthy and socially awkward fiancé, a third rate New York gangster and a loveable drunkard of a boss.

What keeps audiences coming back to “Anything Goes” is the timeless score and musical ability of the casts. This tour’s cast definitely delivered each number with ease.

Reno’s voice was the show’s main attraction during the musical number “Blow Gabriel, and Blow” and in her comedic duet with Billy in “You’re the Top.” What truly sets “Anything Goes” apart from others are dance num-

bers and versatility of the actors. The title song, “Anything Goes” features an impressive tap dancing scene that makes audience members want to get up from their seats and dance.

Xavier junior Laura Kalynchuk commented that the dance numbers showed that “the cast was light on their feet and put on an entertaining performance that made the show an exciting experience.”

Apart from the show’s positive attributes, the performance had a few setbacks. The plot at times was difficult for audience members to stay engaged with and featured moments that did not logically make sense for the sto-

ry. Also, the title character Billy’s voice was not as strong as Reno’s during duet performances and left the audience wanting more from his numbers.

Even with these minor flaws, the cast still brought this Broadway classic to life. And, to quote Kalynchuk, “added heat to an otherwise frigid night.” This tour of “Anything Goes” will be playing in the United States until May 31, 2015.

If you have the chance, see why this show keeps audiences coming back for more.

Newswire Rating:

‘Midsummer’ marvels like none other

BY ALEX SPINDLER
Arts & Entertainment Editor

A gaggle of medically-induced lovers, an aptly-named thespian who acts like an ass and a copious amount of conjuring make up the wonder that is the Xavier University Department of Music and Theatre’s production of Shakespeare’s classic “A Midsummer Night’s Dream.”

This raucous production, directed by Jeremy Dubin of the Cincinnati Shakespeare Company, combines modern adaptation with enthusiastic performances to create the finest production yet staged by the department.

Set in an enchanted forest just outside of Athens, “Midsummer” contains multiple plot points that seamlessly overlap, due in large part to Dubin’s direction and the clarity in the cast’s diction.

The first conflict finds Hermia and Lysander (played by junior Ellen Godbey and sophomore Mac Blais, respectively) escaping the tutelage of Hermia’s father to marry in secrecy. Meanwhile, Helena (played by sophomore Katie Mitchell), though excited for Hermia’s imminent betrothal, constantly pines for the love of Demetrius (played by senior Sterling Shaw).

All four lovers enter the forest where mayhem and chaos ensues à la Sondheim’s “Into the Woods.” Additionally, there is a crop of less-than-adequate actors

attempting to stage a disastrous play, a parallel story of a mortal and immortal royal couple and a few n’er-do-well fairies that appear to be sexually starved.

In its attempts to recreate a forest rave setting, this “Midsummer” achieved this effect thanks in large part to senior Alice Trent’s clever and meticulous lighting design.

Xavier alumna Katie Rossmann’s costume design also smartly dressed each character very well with a few surprises to boot — zoom in on the glow-in-the-dark undershirts and neon colors.

The choice of a proscenium presentation versus a thrust stage allowed for the audience to have a better view of all that was going on and allowed for better sound quality overall. The technical aspects helped to make Shakespeare’s dense syntax more exciting, while Dubin’s subtle inclusion of modern attributes — iPad’s, ’90s pop songs and contemporary choreography — took the production from good to great.

However, there are not enough words to describe the buoyant energy and fluidity of this cast. Not only did these actors and actresses retain the Shakespearean vernacular but they also infused each phrase with purpose, direction and most importantly, humor.

More specifically, sophomore Alex Roberts, who played the devious Puck, stood out as the wise-

cracking trickster who glided effortlessly with her Heelys.

Sophomore Hannah Sheppard, who played the dual role of mortal queen Hippolyta and immortal queen Titania, regally shone in every scene that she was in. The four lovers (Godbey, Blais, Mitchell and Shaw) nicely fused jealousy and love in the same stroke.

Finally, the biggest source of laughter came from junior Patrick McWilliams, who hilariously stole the show as Bottom, the egotistical alpha male of the troupe of mechanics. Mirroring other such pompous yet comical Shakespearean supporting roles like Malvolio in “Twelfth Night,” McWilliams never disappointed and proved to be a constant crowd favorite.

To put it simply, this “Midsummer” scored on every level. The combination of technical aspects, energy, slick direction and exuberant performances made this “Midsummer” fresh from head to toe.

If these are the innovations that are reshaping even Shakespeare’s most performed works, then the Bard’s longevity has nothing to worry about. For more information on other Department of Music and Theatre performances, visit xavier.edu/theatre.

Newswire Rating:



Sophomore Hannah Sheppard fiercely delivered as dual Titania/Hippolyta.

February 25, 2015

Feature

Edited by: Hollis Conners
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For and with others

Growing sustainability at Xavier

By TAYLOR FULKERSON
Managing Editor

Xavier announced three majors in sustainability only two years ago, in the fall of 2013. This May, three students will graduate with sustainability-related degrees. They will be the first students to do so.

Joe McGrath, a senior majoring in Sustainability: Economics & Management (a business sustainability major with concentrations in economics and management), is unique. While both Mark Miller and Michael Murray have been able to incorporate a sustainability-related major in with the majors they were already pursuing, McGrath was unable to do that.

"I switched my junior year from a double major in management and entrepreneurial studies with a double minor in theology and international business and dropped everything to be a sustainability major," McGrath said.

McGrath went on an Alternative Breaks trip as a sophomore to Appalachia. There he examined the effects of mountain-top removal and other coal mining issues. In addition, he looked at European Union sustainability initiatives while studying abroad in Ireland, McGrath found himself in a management class focusing on sustainability.

"I was really enjoying the class, and I said, 'Why am I not studying this?' One thing led to another, I got my credits lined up and I was able to switch majors," McGrath said.

He is now completing the major and also works for Xavier's Urban Farm as the chief operating manager. The urban farm is a student-run business, currently managed by five students from Williams College of Business (WCB).

"We started back in the fall, developing an entire business plan, our business model, our marketing model, and it's taking the skills we've learned in the business school. Along with my team, our passion for sustainability and our passion for urban agriculture, we're turning that into a working business."

The farm sold produce at a local farmers market in Norwood in October of last year at the end of the growing season, making several hundred dollars. The students run the farm with help from a variety of student and faculty advisors, including Sustainability Director Ann Dougherty, professors Kathleen Smythe (history) and Nancy Bertaux (economics), recently-retired professor of management Gerry Brawn and Joe Carter, a visiting professor, director of the Sedler Family Center in WCB.

While students are learning through administering the business side of things, the urban farm could also serve as a "classroom" in the future for professors to deepen students' experiences. With a newly-built hoop house, there is enough space under cover for a classroom-style setting.

According to McGrath, the urban farm will serve the local community well. It brings fresh produce to the area, a need for both North Avondale and Evanston. Parts of both neighborhoods are food deserts, areas without easy access to produce or groceries for residents.

The urban farm, operating as a business, also has to take into account the difficulties of practicing agriculture in the middle of a city, including investigating what is and isn't permitted within city limits. To sell excess produce to Chartwells, the corporation that runs Hoff Dining Commons, the farm will need a fence enclosing it and will not be able to use fertilizer with manure in it.

For McGrath, the work to bring the programs to Xavier and to get the urban farm up and running is well worth it.

"To be right here in the middle of Cincinnati, where we are, and to have an urban agriculture program, is ridiculous to think about for a small, private school, and even more ridiculous to think about in the middle of Cincinnati. UC barely has one, so that says something about us. We're taking big strides to make progress in this," McGrath said. "With the farm, (the university) is showing that it's willing to put physical assets into something and commit the university, commit money, commit time and energy into having fresh produce for the local community (and) the Xavier community."



Photo courtesy of Joe McGrath

Senior Joe McGrath sells fresh produce at a local farmer's market at the corner of Williams and Elsmere Ave.

cal community (and) the Xavier community."

The movement toward teaching and practicing sustainability is also about values.

"When you look at the root of the sustainability movement, the green movement, it's working to better the lives of others and better the lives of everyone, whether that be from a business perspective, a health perspective, ex cetera," McGrath said.

"With being a man or woman for and with others, I think that alone says everything. That defines what sustainability could be. It's that all of your actions are intentional," he said.

So what's next after graduating with this degree? McGrath said that his degree isn't "cookie-cutter": there's no set path for him, but "sustainability is sexy. Every major corporation needs sustainability to be part of its model right now."

Next year he has a job at Macy's working on sustainability, a position he didn't anticipate seeking.

"I was always really against going into the corporate world. Something about it just did not seem appealing to me. But things lined up for me," McGrath said.

He claims that Xavier's commitment to sustainability in and outside the classroom is a benefit for students.

"Rather than graduating with a set degree and having an interest in this, my entire degree is my interest," McGrath said. "And I show my passion through my degree, through the things I'm involved with, growing from that. There isn't a cookie-cutter job for me, but if you're going to get a sustainability degree, I don't think you're looking for cookie-cutter."



Photo courtesy of Joe McGrath

McGrath participated in a project where he helped children plant vegetables in a community garden in Cincinnati.



Photo courtesy of Joe McGrath



Photo courtesy of Joe McGrath